1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

105 sepulture. There is a weird, formal mourning for dead matrons, and suggestions of fear of or veneration for the manes.

172 Seriland is surrounded with prehistoric works, telling of a numerous population who successfully controlled the scant waters for irrigation, built villages and temples and fortresses, cultivated crops, kept domestic animals, and manufactured superior fictile and textile wares; but (save possibly in one spot) these records of aboriginal culture cease at the borders of Seriland. In their stead a few slightly worn pebbles and bits of pottery are found here and there, deeply embedded in the soil and weathered as by the suns of ages. There are also a few cairns of cobbles marking the burial places, and at least one cobble mound of striking dimensions but of unknown meaning; and there are a few shell-mounds, one so broad and high as to form a cape in the slowly transgressing shoreline (Punta Antigualla), and in which the protolithic implements and other relics are alike from the house-dotted surface to the tide level, 90 feet below.

The absence of relics of a superior culture, and the presence of Seri relics throughout deposits of high antiquity, suggest that the tribe is indigenous to Seriland; and this indication harmonizes with the peculiar isolation of the territory, the lowly culture and warlike habits of the people, the essentially distinct language, the singular marriage custom, and the local character of the beast-gods. And all these features combine to mark the Seri as children of the soil, or autochthones.

Recent Explorations and Surveys

114 Present knowledge of Seriland and its inhabitants is based primarily
121 on the work of two expeditions by the Bureau of American Ethnology,
[122] conducted in 1894 and 1895, respectively; and, secondarily, on researches into the cartography and literature (descriptive, historical, and scientific) of the region. Both of the expeditions were projected largely for the purpose of making collections among little-known native tribes in the interests of the National Museum, and the general ethnologic inquiries were ancillary to this purpose.

The 1894 expedition was directed chiefly toward work among the Papago Indians in the vaguely defined territory known as Papagueria, lying south of Gila river and west of the Sierra Madre in southwestern Arizona and western Sonora (Mexico). Outfitting at Tucson early
[122] in October, the party moved southward, visiting the known Papago rancherias and seeking others, and thus defining the eastern limits of the Papago country. On the approach to the southern limits of the tribal range toward Rio Sonora, the evil repute of the Seri Indians sounded larger and larger, suggesting the desirability of scientific study of the tribe; and it was decided to attempt investigation. Accordingly the party was reorganized at Hermosillo, and, with the
114 sanction of the Secretary of State and Acting Governor, Señor Don Ramón Corral, proceeded to Rancho San Francisco de Costa Rica,

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

where a temporary Seri rancheria was found occupied by about sixty of the tribe, including subchief Mashém, who speaks Spanish. In this part of the work the expedition was accompanied by Señor Pascual Encinas, the owner of the rancho visited, and doubtless the best informed white man concerning the habits, customs, personnel, and habitat of the tribe. About a week was spent in intercourse with the occupants of the rancheria, when the studies were brought to an end through the illness of Señor Encinas, and the consequent necessity for return to Hermosillo. The expedition then proceeded northwestward and northward along a route so laid as to define the western limits of Papagueria proper, and reached Tucson near the end of the year. In addition to the leader, the party comprised Mr William Dinwiddie, photographer; José Lewis, Papago interpreter, and E. P. Cunningham, teamster. The outfit was furnished chiefly by Mr J. M. Berger, of San Xavier (near Tucson). On the visit to the Seri frontier the party was accompanied by Señor Encinas, Don Arturo Alvemar-Leon (who acted as Spanish interpreter), and two or three attachés of Molino del Encinas.[1]

The second expedition was directed primarily toward investigation of the Seri, and only incidentally to continuation of the researches among the Papago. Outfitting at Tucson in October (again with the aid of Mr Berger), the expedition proceeded southward by a route different from those previously traversed, and carried forward a plane-table route survey covering a considerable zone from the international boundary at Sasabe to Rio Sonóra. Descending the previously unmapped course of Rio Bacuache, the expedition reached the Rancho de San Francisco de Costa Rica on December 1, 1895, and, although conditions were found unfavorable in that the Seri were on the warpath, immediately prepared for the extension of the work into Seriland.

A preliminary trip was made into the mainland portion of the Seri habitat, terminating at the crest of Johnson peak, the highest point in Sierra Seri. The triangulation and topographic surveys were carried over the territory traversed, and several points were fixed on Isla Tiburon; but the natives, agitated by a skirmish with vaqueros on the frontier a day or two earlier, had withdrawn to remoter parts of the territory, and were not encountered. The party returned to Costa Rica, a rude boat was completed, transported across the desert via Pozo Escalante to Embarcadero Andrade, and launched in Bahia Kunkaak. The surveys were extended to the southern portion of Sierra Seri and Isla Tasnne, and, after various difficulties and delays due to dearth of fresh water, to gales, and to other causes, the party (enlarged for the purpose) finally landed on Tiburon. Many Seri rancherias were found on

[1] The more noteworthy details of the organization and work of the two expeditions are set forth in the administrative reports of the Bureau for the fiscal years 1894-95 and 1895-96. Certain members of this party are shown in the accompanying half-tone, forming plate II: Señor Encinas seated at the end of the table; his son, Don Manuel (bareheaded), and Don Ygnacio Lozania at his right; a grandson behind him, and Señor Alvemar-Leon seated at his left, with Mashém kneeling over the table in the foreground.

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

Despite
137 the wealth of place-names and the strongly accentuated configuration which the nomenclature expresses, Seriland is one of the most hopeless deserts of the American hemisphere.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Since most of the field work of the two expeditions lay in the neighboring Republic of Mexico, it became necessary to ask official sanction
122 for the operations from the Mexican government; and it is a pleasure to say that every possible privilege and courtesy were extended by both federal and state officials. Especial acknowledgments are due to
000 the Mexican minister (and afterward ambassador) to the United States, his Excellency Don Mateo Romero (now deceased); to the Ministro de Fomento of the Mexican Republic, Excelencia Don Fernando Leal; and to the governor of the State of Sonora, Señor Don Ramón Corral. Equal acknowledgments are due to various United States officials, notably Honorable W. Woodville Rockhill, First Assistant Secretary of State when the expeditions were planned; and it is a pleasure to advert to the active interest taken in both expeditions by Honorable S. P. Langley, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, and to the careful attention given the 1894 expedition by the late Dr G. Brown Goode, Assistant Secretary of the Institution.

Mr Willard D. Johnson did invaluable service in connection with
114 the second expedition, particularly in the execution of surveys and the
126 construction of maps in inimitable style. Mr William Dinwiddie is to be credited with the excellent photographs made during the 1894 expedition, with the representation of the devices used in Seri face-painting, and with various other aids to the investigation; while Mr J. W. Mitchell is to be credited with the photographs made on Isla Tiburon, and with other contributions to the success of the 1895 expedition.
000 Acknowledgments are due also to all of the participants in both expeditions, whose names appear in other paragraphs. Their contributions were not primarily intellectual, yet were of a kind and amount to be forever remembered among men who have worked and hungered and thirsted and stood guard together. The deepest debt connected with the field work is to the now venerable but ever vigorous pioneer, Señor Pascual Encinas; and no small part of this debt goes over to his estimable spouse, Señora Anita Encinas, who twice traversed the long road from Hermosillo to Costa Rica in the interest of the 1895 expedition.

The scientific results of the researches have been enriched by invaluable contributions from Director Powell's store of ethnologic knowledge, and by suggestions from Messrs Frank Hamilton Cushing, F. W. Hodge, James Mooney, and other collaborators in the Bureau of
114 American Ethnology. The qualities of the colored illustrations are due largely to the artistic skill of Mr Wells M. Sawyer, by whom they were designed, and of Mr DeLancey Gill, by whom the proofs were revised. The Spanish translations are due chiefly to Colonel F. F.

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

into the saguesa forests of the eastern base of Sierra Seri; on the east it is miles in breadth, passing gradually into the normal Sonoran plain; on the south it widens still farther, stretching all the way to Arenales de Gil and Pozo Escalante, and merging into the playa-like mud-flats bordering Laguna la Cruz, into which the gulf waters are sometimes forced by southwesterly gales at high spring tides. Throughout this portion of the desert, marine shells are scattered over the playa-like flats or lodged in the adjacent banks, sometimes in great beds; the vegetation is scantier than usual and largely of salt-loving habit; the mud-flats are usually coated with saline and alkaline crusts, while the dunes are soft and fluffy, and expand into broad belts perforated with the tunnels of the surprisingly abundant rodents. Across this plain of bitter sand-dust lie the two hard land routes to Seriland—the supposed Escalante route of 1700, down the fan of Rio Bacuache and thence by Barranca Salina; and the Encinas route, down the northern border of the Rio Sonora fan and thence by Pozo Escalante to the shores of Bahia Kino.[1]

Desierto Encinas is an impossible human habitat in any proper sense; it is merely a broad and hardly passable boundary between habitats. The hardy stock of the frontier ranchos, pasturing partly on the thorny fruit of the cholla, push far out on the plains, and are sometimes watered for short periods, under strong guards of heavily armed vaqueros, at Barranca Salina; yet the greater part of the expanse is trodden only by the Seri. Two or three ruined frames of Seri jacales and a few graves crown the low knoll near Pozo Escalante, and there are one or two house remnants near Barranca Salina; these are notable not only as the easternmost remaining outposts of Seri occupancy, but because they represent the only known instances in all Seriland of the erection of even temporary houses adjacent to water. Distinct paths, trodden deep by bare Seri feet, radiate from both waters toward the Seriland interior, but no traceable trails extend eastward.

The southern limit of Desierto Encinas is marked either by the broad mud-flats opening into Laguna la Cruz or by the coast of the gulf, the coast cutting the lower portions of the plain being accentuated by a sand-bank 30 or 40 feet high, against which the surf thunders in nearly continuous roar audible halfway or all the way to Pozo Escalante. A Seri trail skirts the crest of this bank, sending occasional branches into

[1] Both the routes were traversed by the expedition of 1895, the former from the headwaters of Rio Bacuache to the upper portion of its alluvial fan, and thence from the abandoned Rancho Libertad on the lower portion of the fan across Desierto Encinas by way of Barranca Salina. In the northern crossing a light vehicle (the first to traverse this portion of the desert), drawn by four horses and aided by several horsemen, was taken from Rancho Libertad across the northern portion of Playa Noriega and thence up Arroyo Mitchell to a point midway between Barranca Salina and Johnson peak, and was brought back over the same route. The Encinas trail from Rancho San Francisco de Costa Rica was traversed four times each way by the same outfit, and once each way by the running gear of a heavy wagon carrying the rude craft (about 1,000 pounds in weight) in which the Seri waters were navigated, this vehicle being drawn by 8 to 12 horses, frequently changed. Typical aspects of both routes are shown in plate 12, the upper figure representing the Encinas trail and the lower a distant view of Sierra Seri, taken from Playa Noriega, in the depths of Desierto Encinas.

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

132 The broad valley between Sierras Seri and Kunkaak, bottomed by El Infiernillo, is especially beset by fierce and capricious gales; the general atmospheric drift is disturbed by the leading and lesser sierras, as well as by temperature convection from the gulf, and eddies are developed in such wise as to send air-currents directly or obliquely up or down the valley. These local or sublocal winds are characteristic. Judging from observations covering several weeks, the valley is wind-swept longitudinally for an average of eighteen or twenty hours daily, the winds ranging from strong breezes to gales so stiff as to load the air with sand ashore and spray asea; and even the calms may be broken

●[122]

FIG. 5.—Embarking on Bahia Kunkaak in la lancha *Anita*.

any minute by sudden gusts and williwaws, passing rapidly as they arrive. Not only waves but wind itself combines with tides to shape the [134] structural features of the valley; nowhere within it do flour-fine sands like those of Desierto Encinas occur, save as a hardly perceptible constituent of the dunes and banks of coarser sand—they have been blown into the sea or beyond the limits of the valley. Throughout the strait 132 so expressively named by its explorers, the capriciousness of the sea 133 culminates, despite the shoalness and the protection from easterly and westerly winds; the storm currents and tide-currents are half the time opposed, raising breakers even when the air is nearly still; eddies and whirls and cross-currents arise constantly, and even at the stillest

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

extensive rancherias near Punta Narraganzett measure 10 miles by trail from the same aguaje; the half dozen jacales about Campo Navidad are separated by some 15 miles of stony and hilly pathway from the alternative watering places of Tinaja Anita and Arroyo Carrizal;[1] and the huts crowning the great shell-heap of Punta Antigualla—one of the most striking records of immemorial occupancy in America—are nearly or quite 10 miles by trail from Pozo Escalante, and still further from Aguaje Parilla, the nearest sources of potable water. These are but typical instances; and while there are ruined huts (evidently regarded as temporales) near the dead waters of Barranca Salina and Pozo Escalante, they tell the tribal policy of locating habitations in places surprisingly remote from running water. Like other desert folk, the Seri have learned to economize in water-carrying by swigging incredible quantities on their occasional visits to the aguajes; it is probable, too, that their systems are inured, somewhat as are those of the desert animals that survive deprivation of water for days or months, to prolonged abstinence from liquid food; yet it seems safe to assume that at least half of the water required in their vital economy (say 2 or 3 pounds apiece daily, on an average) is consumed after transportation over distances ordinarily ranging from 4 to 12 miles. Under these conditions the Seri have naturally produced a highly developed water industry; they are essentially and primarily water-carriers, and all their other industries are subordinated to this function.

Concordantly with their customs, the Seri have a highly differentiated aquarian device in the form of a distinctive type of olla, which is remarkable for the thinness and fragility of the ware, i. e., for largeness of capacity in proportion to weight. Representative specimens are illustrated in plates XXXII and XXXIII (the former painted, as already described). The dimensions of the two vessels are as follows: painted olla, height 34 cm. (13⅜ inches), mean diameter 32.5 cm. (12⅞ inches); plain olla, height 32 cm. (12⅝ inches), mean diameter 32 cm. In both specimens the walls are slightly thickened at the brim, those of the painted vessel measuring about 4 mm. and those of the plain vessel about 4.5 to 5 mm. in thickness. Below the brim the walls are thinned to about 3 mm., as is shown in the fractured neck of the painted specimen. The capacity of these Seri vessels in proportion to their weight, compared with that of typical examples of ware produced by other desert peoples, is shown in the accompanying table.

Comparison of the mean ratios indicates that the Seri ware is almost exactly twice as economical as that of the Pueblos—i. e., that its capacity is twice as great in proportion to the weight of the vessel; and that

[1] The preciousness of water in this hard province was impressed in the 1895 expedition, during which the cost of the commodity, reckoned on the basis of time and labor involved in obtaining it, was estimated at $10 or $12 per gallon, or about the wholesale price of the finest champagnes.

2: Kroeber E-5 (1930)1931 NU31 Seri NU31

197 are inconclusive. Some of the outstanding speech similarities and
171 differences are given in a section of the present paper; a fuller presentation will be made in a subsequent classification of the Yuman languages.

The Yuman tribes of the United States are better known, and
171 there are published or collected accounts of the Diegueño, Kamia, Cocopa, Yuma, Mohave, Maricopa-Halchidhoma, Yavapai, Walapai, and Havasupai. These fall into two groups, culturally: the farming tribes of the Colorado (and Gila) bottomlands, and the gathering tribes of the desert and semi-desert of Arizona and southern California, the latter again affiliating with those of northern Baja California, such as the Kiliwa and Akwa'ala-Paipai. As might be expected, it is the desert Yumans of Arizona who show the greater number of resemblances to the Seri and fewest differences.

The Pima as the immediate neighbors of the Seri, and the Opata and Cahita tribes beyond, ought to show many similarities with the Seri, plus differences due to their agriculture and activities like weaving which are normally encouraged by sedentary habits.

Such are some of the indications as to the history of the Seri
114 and their culture, as discussed more in detail below so far as the preliminary data available allow. Further and intensive investigation
121 is obviously needed. On the side of material life, Mr. Davis' studies
122 ought largely to fill the need. For social and spiritual culture, the work will be difficult. It is not that the Seri are unwilling, but that they are inaccessible and hard to communicate with. The obvious procedure would be a study of their speech until it served as a medium. In that way both their language and their culture could be recorded hand in hand. But the obstacles are numerous. The island is thirty miles long by twenty wide. There is not a roof on it. The six summer months are extremely hot, and, along the coast, said to be almost insufferable from gnats and mosquitoes. Most of the few water holes are inland; the Seri live, except during the cactus and mesquite harvest, scattered in small settlements along the shore, often several miles from water. There is no communication across the strait, except by open boat, subject to weather conditions; and then it is twenty miles to the nearest house and a hundred to a town. Life on the island would be both harsh and monotonous to an unusual degree. Nor can the Seri as yet be studied by taking one or two of them to civilization for a prolonged stay. They soon become restless and homesick. Added to all this is the fact that their Spanish, though reasonably fluent in some cases, is ungrammatical, and would hardly serve for securing paradigms or accurate translations of texts; and while able to endure hardships, the people are not accustomed to steady work or mental concentration. The difficulties would not be insuperable, when the destined linguist-ethnologist undertakes the task; but he should not under-rate them.

171 the latter are largely unconcerned with by far the greater majority of them.
825 If there is any magical importance attached to any of the species, it has not been discovered in the course of this field work and this fact has been corroborated by other recent observers.3

Summary

182 Extensive field work of this sort has many ramifications. One of the main
825 items investigated has been the acuteness of the native observation of animals. In the case of the Seris, this knowledge progressively increases both in volume and in accuracy with the increasing economic importance of the group. The mammals and large fish are the best known followed in order by birds, reptiles, smaller fish, insects and marine invertebrates. It is also obvious that local ecology, habits and anatomy of the various species of animals set definite limitations upon observation. Lack of understanding of the hibernation of reptiles through the winter is a case in point. Another example is in the Seris' inability to distinguish between the sexes of birds. Purely cultural factors are also potent as can be seen in the standardized responses to the questions about the age of animals and the development of birds. Seri knowledge of animals is remarkably free from mythology, although a number of animals are known to have had mythological significance in the past.

825 There is little fear of animals except of those which are actually dangerous.

An interesting fact emerges from the comparison of the particular aspects of the knowledge of natural history. Namely, that this knowledge is not always symmetrical in that some facets of natural history are far better known by the Seris than others. An excellent illustration is provided here in the complicated ways of sexing animals, in their extensive knowledge of the food habits of some of the animals and their ecological environment, and by their very limited ability to guess correctly the age of animals.

Not all of these differences can be accounted for in natural terms and it is suggested that the answer to this asymmetry lies, perhaps, in the cultural factors unaccounted for in this study. In spite of their dependence upon a relatively few economically important species of animals, the Seris do make use of much of their animal environment in their diet, as would be expected of a marginal people who still live today in a fishing and gathering economy.

FOOTNOTES

1. This field work was made possible by research grants from the Department of Anthropology, University of Washington. Most of the work was done in Desemboque, Sonora, during the summer of 1953 with some additional work there in May 1955.

For much help in carrying out this field work I am indebted to my friend, Leo Sandoval, a school teacher in Desemboque.

[89]

Seri Social Structure (1)

114
121
122

1. The material presented here was collected on a three-week visit to the Seri zone, the costs of which were defrayed by the I.N.A.H. [Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia], for the purpose of planning later investigations. It took place in January, 1952, in the company of Mr. Paul Finninger of M.C.M. [Mexico City College].

121 The permanent system of interacting influences that is presented among the Seri is of great scientific interest for its extreme characteristics of geographic isolation, environmental hostility, poverty, and the small size of the community.

13 The Seri occupy coastal territory in Sonora on the Gulf of California; formerly they covered a territory that toward the end of the 18th century, along the coast extended from Guaymas Bay, including it, to Punta Peñasco and, on the mainland, included the area in the vicinity of the present city of Hermosillo. They have been reduced little by little, now occupying only some isolated points on Cape Tepoca, Desemboque, and Tiburón Island, places from which, in spite of their inclemency, they are also being displaced.

648 Until some 30 years ago, most of the contacts of the Seri with Western culture had been warlike, ferociously defending their skins from the attacks of the yori (Mexican) invaders. Their contacts with the natives have been with the Yaqui, Papago, and those of Santa Rosalía (crossing the gulf). It was not until about 20 years ago, when the establishment of fishing camps was initiated with mestizo capital, that a new orientation in the treatment of the Seri came into being. Existing side by side with them at present are various Mexicans who exploit the products of Seri fishing, and some scientific investigators, principally from the United States.

13 They form enclaves in the heart of Aridamerica, with its cactus, shrubs and grasses, without flowing water, and with abundant flying and, especially, marine fauna.

121 Another point in the procedure is of par-
amount importance in this type of research. Fair
●[120] general knowledge of practical field natural history can have no substitute. The investigator must have this basic knowledge, to realize the range of possibilities in the answers and identify any answers not commensurate with the actual events. This way, even without interest in the mythology, one may get on the track of a myth. Although, in
825 general, anthropologists seem to think that na-
121 tural history knowledge of the primitive folks must be ridden with the mythology and must be different than ours, my rather extensive field work persuaded me that this is not so at all. Mythology there is, if one looks for it. But the bulk of their knowledge is based on sound obervation as anyone acquainted with the natural history will readily discover. One must be able to disentangle the two qualities. That this is so is well indicated in a large number of animals where the informants simply replied to queries on this or that subject in the usual *quien sabe*. And indeed, the more obscure the subject, the more likely one got that sort of an answer.

128 In the analysis of the actual material a certain schematic programme has been followed. For the sake of convenience, material has been grouped according to the major divisions of the animal kingdom. Some may object to this saying that this is just our way of classifying animals but that aboriginal classification does not follow these lines. For certain purposes, this may be true, but for my own purpose I find my procedure more convenient. Regardless of the hypothetical native mode of classification, one may form a question.
128 How do the Seri distinguish different mammals?
825 I may say also that our own groupings are not different from those of the Seri or any other tribes. Their recognition of differences among animals may be at times hazy or from our point of view erroneous. But by and large, birds to them are birds and snakes are snakes and even within the insects, without actually naming differences, they tended to group together insects according to their order. Exceptional cases, bat, whale and the like, remain exceptions just as they were to the early Western naturalists, the 16th century Gesner or Alrovandi, for example, to whom their place in the scheme of nature was based on the analogies. But this didn't prevent these men from grouping other animals much the same as we do. In the same way, the South African Bushmen may regard Mantis as a supreme diety, but this does not prevent them to say that it is also like an insect.

128 The scheme I followed turned out useful. In the end I have obtained generalized ideas on the salient features of natural history of different animal groupings which I could compare with each other. The internal evidence is most interesting, more so that in some details it differs qualitatively and quantitatively from the materials I have gathered among other tribes.

[P. 5 B]

[23 before him, has been a friend of the Seris for years. It was his father
15] who brought McGee to Tiburon in 1895, and in many ways they have shown kindness to the Seris.

[22] I hired an auto-truck for fifty dollars to take the necessary people and supplies. These supplies consisted of some fine-tooth combs, needles, thread, one bolt of white muslin, 150-pounds of flour, panoche, saws, nails, harmonicas, little round mirrors, fish twine, hooks, 2-bits and other things.

We left at 6:30 a.m. With us was the driver Ricardo, his friend Rafael Ysabel, son of an ex-governor of Sonora. When we reached Bob's ranch, *El Providencia*, five or more miles out, we added a one-eyed Mexican and Bob's brother.

After a simple dinner at the ranch house we drove across the mouth of the Sonora river, a broad, flat alluvial plain probably four or five miles across. We circled about and turned north, stopping at the edge of a broad shallow bay. The tide was down and the shore was slimy mud and filled at places with sharp-edged clam and oyster shells. There were oyster flats at the edge of the mud, so Roberto and the Mexican waded out and secured enough of them for supper.

[13] During the day we ran close to a Gila monster, a horrid looking black and orange mottled fat lizard who waddled along. Rafael held his head with a rifle, reached down and caught him in back of the head, and held him up. He hissed like a snake and bears a bad reputation.

[33] The country was flat and the road pretty good. Detached mountains we passed during the day and one range called *Siete Cerros*, Seven Mountains, with peaks all in one row, reached for fifteen or twenty miles. We passed a few ranches where the people were pumping water from wells or hauling in the old turn-table way with a mule and rawhide buckets. Then we made camp, got everything ready for an early start the next day and turned in.

At dawn three men took the boat with all our traps and groceries and fifteen gallons of fresh water, and Rafael and I walked up to the point to meet it. Louis and the driver and truck returned to the ranch. The weeds and ground were very wet and we came to some sloughs filled with soft ooze. These were impossible to cross, so we went around them and then decided to strike for the ocean side and go along a sand bank. This we did, and when we reached the end we saw the boat waiting for us half a mile or more across a great flat.

[13] The ocean view was grand. A great rock, *Alcatraz Island*, protruded from the sea a short distance out, on which countless cormorants roost and raise their young. Bob often gathers their eggs.

We reached the boat and climbed in and pushed off into deep water. There was no wind and the tide was part way against us, but we rowed, three of us, for many many miles. We landed in a small cove, drew up

[text continues on p. 15]

11: Moser L-5 (1956-1961) 1963.
NU31 Seri NU31

so named must be of the same sex as the first. The significance of land ownership needs further investigation.

Many of the Seri still prefer, when possible, to live in their chosen band area. Sometimes a person, when he is approaching death, will ask to be taken to his own i?iziiting, where he can die and be buried in the area of his choice.

NOTES

1. Due to printing limitations, stress on Seri words has been omitted, and several orthographic symbol changes have been made for this paper. The phonetic values of the symbols used are the following: p is voiceless labial stop; t is vl. dental stop; k is vl. velar stop; ? is glottal stop; ƒ is vl. labial flat spirant; w is vl. labial grooved-rounded spirant; s is vl. alveolar spirant; z is vl. alveo-palatal spirant; l is vl. lateral spirant; h is vl. velar spirant; x is vl. back velar spirant; m is labial nasal; n is dental nasal; ng is velar nasal; y is palatal semivowel; i is a high close front vowel; e is a low close front vowel; a is a low open central vowel; o is a mid close back vowel.

2. These data were compiled during field trips to the Seri camps during the years 1956-61, the studies being carried out under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. The principal informant was R. Herrera T. whose information was checked with and supplemented by nine of the older members of the tribe. I am indebted to my colleague, David Thomas, who read an earlier draft of this paper and made helpful suggestions.

3. 1) W. J. McGee, "The Seri Indians," *Bureau of American Ethnology, Annual Report*, No. 17, Part 1. Washington, 1898. 2) A. L. Kroeber, "The Seri," *Southwest Museum Papers*, No. 6. Los Angeles, 1931. 3) W. B. Griffen, "Notes on Seri Indian Culture, Sonora, Mexico," *Latin American Monograph Series*, No. 10, Gainesville, 1959.

4. It will be noted that between subdivision 3 and 4 on Fig. 3 there is an unnumbered area, the status of which is uncertain.

5. Kroeber states that McGee's concept of Seri maternal lineages crystallized into totemic clans with matron rule seem a fantasy. In Kroeber's opinion, "The Seri may never have had sibs or clans; but the fact that they appear to lack them now is no positive evidence that they were without them three centuries ago. Shifts of residence, contraction of territory, shrinkage of numbers, amalgamation of distinct bands, may well have obliterated much of such social fabric as they once possessed."

Griffen discusses the nature of the former Seri bands and states, "they may have been patrilineal and exogamous. The criteria . . . that Julian Steward has exposited for the formation of exogamous, patrilineal bands . . . are and presumably would have been met formerly in the Seri habitat." Griffen lists other aspects of this type of band which are also verified to some extent by his data. From reading his material, it is obvious that he suspects the existence of clans at some earlier period. He emphasizes the need for further investigation.

6. G. P. Murdock, *Social Structure*, Macmillan Co., New York, 1949.

7. Marriages were usually contracted within the band.

8. As Kroeber points out, their memory likely covers only the latter part of the period of Spanish contacts.

9. The Seri recall nothing of Seri-Pima contacts and little of Seri-Apache relations.

10. The story is related that one day some Seri entered a cave where they found several Papago jugs filled with seeds. Being hungry, the people ate the seeds and left some arrows as token payment. The Seri say that the Papago apparently believed the arrows were intended as an insult. Fighting broke out soon afterward.

11. The Seri concept of the band annihilations is seen to be in contradiction to McGee's statement (p. 132): "Concordantly with their primary characteristic, the Seri have avoided ethnic and demotic union beyond the narrow limits of their own kindred; and even of these they seem to have cast out parts, annihilating the Guaymа and Upanguaymа, displacing and nearly destroying the Tepoka, and outlawing individuals and (apparently) small groups."